

Contact: Kenneth Yates
Organizing Committee
Richmond May Day Coalition

PO Box 7055
Richmond, VA 23221
Phone: (804) 496-1568



Press Release

Richmond May Day Coalition Statement on May Day March Restrictions

Coalition Announces Modified Plans for March During May Day Festivities; Responds to Richmond Police Department

Richmond, VA, April 29, 2011: May Day is one day out of the year where individuals, faith-based groups, unions, students, teachers, and progressive organizations demonstrate publicly to celebrate the more quiet work they do every day. As members of this community, the Richmond May Day Coalition wants to peacefully and safely express our concern for the attack on millions of working class families and workers rights in Virginia and across the country on May 1, 2011, known for over a century as May Day. We cannot fully participate in the democratic process without the First Amendment rights to free speech and assembly explicitly guaranteed us by the U.S. Constitution. To that end, the May Day Organizing Committee has made every effort to adhere to the Richmond Police Department (RPD)'s permitting process while planning our street march. The goal has always been to work with the police to ensure the safety and satisfaction of all parties.

Unfortunately, RPD has chosen to respond to our good faith efforts by erecting arbitrary and unlawful barriers to our demonstration. The most egregious barrier is the fee they insist on charging the coalition for doing the job we already pay them to do. As working people, we have already borne the expense of public safety through our tax dollars. We find it redundant and unnecessary to pay extra for public safety at a peaceful demonstration. Apparently, RPD believes taxes pay only for the security of people who keep their mouths shut and continue shopping.

Furthermore, since no ordinance on the books requires any extra payment for a permit, RPD's actions amount to unlawful extortion. We challenged RPD's attempt to rent our First Amendment rights

For Immediate Release

